

Mating Deviation

by fyrebirch

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Summary: The year is 2300 and Earth no longer exists. Famine and poverty are non-existent, disease is at an all-time low and emotions have no impact. Society is perfect, but is there such a thing as too perfect? After discovering her ancestor's diary, Bella learns that there's more to this foolproof world than meets the eye. COLLAB WITH VAMPIREGIRL93.

1. Announcements

Fran betas and 2browneyes, ceceprincess1217, and Lissa pre-read the OS for us, but Judyblue has come on board for the fic.

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<p>BPOV

_Dear Diary, _

_My name is Amelia, and today I watched the world end. _

Before this, I was nothing but an English professor dating a historian named Theodore Swan. I lived in an apartment in Cambridge, working for one of the most prestigious colleges in the United States. I had no reason to suspect my life would change so drastically although I can't say the same for Theodore.

The night everything changed, Theodore came to my apartment to propose. The word 'yes' had barely left my mouth before six federal agents burst through my door, demanding I come with them.

_I was left with no other choice. Theodore and I were outnumbered. He screamed after me as a strange man dragged me from my home, the others cornering him. _

I asked the stranger if I was under arrest, but he responded with a simple, "Amelia â€¦ I'm sorry for the intrusion, but we have little time for this. Please buckle your harness. Your flight is set to leave in ten minutes and we cannot afford to be late."

_I was about to ask him what he meant when I felt a sharp pain at my nape, followed by an acute numbing sensation. My vision blurred, my head lolling to the side as the man pulled a small syringe from my neck. One second I was stricken with fear, the next I was encased in darkness. _

I awoke sometime later to an oddly familiar voice. My eyes strained against bright overhead lights, my head spinning as I regained consciousness. I glanced to my left and panicked, discovering I was hooked up to a machine.

"_Amelia, I'm Doctor Cullen." My head snapped upward, my eyes met with a dark haired man who I immediately recognizedâ€"he was on CNN recently. "I'm sorry; you must feel very confused at the moment. I promise you there is an explanation for all of this."_

_Doctor Cullen explained to me that I was in a hospital getting my blood and body checked. When I asked him why it mattered, he told me, "Because your mind and blood are pertinent to the continued existence of the human race." _

_The explanation I was provided was in the form of a short video. In less than twenty-four hours, I was to leave Earth with a selected group of people. We'd travel to a planet that would take well over one hundred and fifty years. I later realized scientists had known for decades that this day would come, and we were never to find out about it until now. _

_I soon became acutely aware there would be no choice in the matter. In the blink of an eye, I'd become a science experiment. My entire existence up to this point ceased to matter. Life on Earth was coming to an end; everyone I knew and loved would die. _

_And they did. _

_I watched as Earth disintegrated in front of my very eyes through the porthole of a spaceship transferring hundreds of passengers to the Tesla Enterprise. Everyone cried as they watched Earth endâ€"with it, all their loved ones. I was sure everyone I knew was gone until the moment I was delivered to a pod for educators such as myself and was met, face-to-face, with Teddy. _

Hope slowly began to restore itself.

I threw my arms around him, sobbing uncontrollably. He held me for what felt like hours, also crying silently. I then asked Teddy if he knew what they wanted from us, and he cleared the tears from my cheeks as he replied, "They want us to replenish the human race."

"Isabella."

The journal nearly flies out of my hand as a digitalized voice rings through my ears. I glance up at the blue hologram flashing across the room.

"Y-yes?" I ask, closing the journal and tucking it beneath my arm as JAKE drifts forward. His screen changes to a video of a woman.

"Your mother is standing outside the door, would you like her to enter?"

My eyes widen. "Yes, please, let her in. Thank you, JAKE."

"You are welcome, Isabella." His hologram closes and the white doors to my room slide open. My mother emerges from the hall dressed in her standard crÃ"me suit, her hair wrapped in a neat bun at the top of her head.

"Is everything all right?" she asks hesitantly, her eyebrows drawing together. "The Mating Announcements are about to be made. Why are you not ready yet?"

"Oh," I murmur, glancing down at the journal under my arm. Her eyes are drawn to it as well, her expression confused. "I found this in the ceiling," I inform her, knowing there is no point in lying. "It is a diary Amelia Swan kept, dated all the way back to 2150."

Her eyebrows rise. "Really?" she asks. "What does she say?"

I hesitate. "I have only just begun reading, but from what I can gather she was a very, umâ€¦" I pause, searching my brain for the correct term. "Passionate. She was not brought here of her own free will."

"Of course not. Most individuals were handpicked by the commander and forced onto the ship. They would never willingly leave their families behind."

I nod, already aware of our history. One of the first things we learn on Tesla is why our ancestors were transferred here. I know that the captain at the time chose a very specific group of individuals from all around the world, each of whom were assigned to one of the five pods; Education, Engineering, Farming, Healing, and last but not least likely, Commanding. The Commanding Pod is the smallest, yet most powerful sector of the ship.

"This was different," I mumble. She glances at me with a questioning look. "Amelia Swan was mated with someone she claimed she loved."

Her eyebrows lift in surprise. "Hm," she hums. "What are the odds? One in a thousand, I suppose."

I nod in agreement. I have heard that term rarely during my lifetime. Most people on Tesla are foreign to the concept altogether. Working in the library, I am often exposed to words others do not understand. Words that stood out on places like Earth, but do not apply here. I have wondered if it were possible for individuals who were mated to experience love, but have never heard of any such case.

"Well," my mother sighs out. "You should be going soon. The announcements will begin and you cannot miss them. Remember, Isabella, this is your duty."

I narrow my eyes in her direction but do not argue. "Yes, ma'am."

She nods and retreats from the room. I huff out an agitated sigh and sink down on the bed, tucking the journal beneath the mattress to ensure its safekeeping. I pull my hair into a bun similar to my mother's, attempting to avoid the trepidation I feel toward this day.

I was born not a native of Earth, but rather one of the Andromeda Galaxy, as were my compeers and those before us. For the last one hundred and fifty years, our existence has continued to thrive on a system that consists of two missions: service and reproduction. As I am seventeen-years-old, I have already mastered my profession as a librarian in the Education Pod. Meaning, I have only one duty left to fulfill.

Our companions are handpicked for us from the Commanding Pod before we are even birthed. It is something we are taught to accept and embrace, for we would not exist if it were not for this predetermined copulation.

However much I tell myself that I have nothing to fear, there is an anxiousness that clings to me throughout the morning as I prepare for the ceremony. Jitters, I suppose, or perhaps I am just overwrought after learning that people like us, who were chosen to breed together, could do something more than simply coexist. I tell myself that it is absurd, and yet Amelia and Theodore Swan are proof of ardor's existence.

I exit my efficiency unit and keep my eyes trained to the floor on my way to the elevator.

"Isabella!" I look over my shoulder and notice Angela approaching. "Good, you are just now leaving too. I am glad I am not the only one who is running behind."

She waves her hand, shining the silver tattoo on the inside of her wrist over the crease in the door. A blue beam flashes and the doors slide open.

"I was reading," I explain as we board the conveyor. "That journal I found, the one that belonged to Amelia Swan."

"Oh?" she asks as the doors close. I feel a slight shift as the room carries us up to the next level. "I was wondering why you did not show for breakfast this morning, but I figured you were not feeling well. Mating Announcements usually tend to incite some anxiousness, but it is completely normal."

I manage to nod, agreeing with her. "Yes," I murmur.

Thankfully, Angela does not question me as the doors reopen on the sixth floor, the highest and commanding sector. We keep our heads down as we quickly walk the hallway. When we reach the center of the pod, Angela uses her wrist-key in an attempt to open the door.

"It won't work," I inform her. She turns to me with a perplexed expression. "Our keys work in our pods only."

Angela would have no way of knowing thisâ€”she has only used her key in the Education Pod. We have never had reason to use them outside of our own pod because the doors to the commanding center are always open when we are needed inside; which can only mean one thing.

"We are late," she mutters.

I nod, taking a step back. I open my mouth to suggest we knock, stopping as the door slides open. My eyes widen at the blond-haired, green-eyed figure approaching us. The man is clad in a silver suit that clings to his form, his name sprawled in dark gray letters across the left side of his chest.

"C-captain Cullen," I stutter, awestruck.

Captain's gaze falls on me, his eyebrows lifting. "Isabella," he states, the corners of his lips upturning as he glances to my friend. Angela blinks at him. "You two come inside, we were just about to begin when we noticed your absence. Are you feeling all right this morning?"

When I realize he is awaiting a response from us, I nod. "Yes, Captain. We are fine, thank you. Just lost track of time."

He smiles and steps aside to grant us enough berth to pass. I move forward, my eyes widening as I take in the room, overwhelmed at the sight of the large body of people. They are all seated in blue glass chairs, chattering about as though this was just another routine assembly. There is a stage set at the forefront of the room with a hologram flashing 'Mating Day' across the top.

"Please find your pod-mates, girls," I hear Captain say. "We have much to discuss and should not waste any time."

Angela and I quickly find the Education Pod and take our seats. Captain walks over to the stage and assumes a position beside our Co-Captain, Peter Denali. The chattering stops abruptly, the room growing quiet.

"Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Mating Announcement Ceremony," Captain begins, smiling. "As you should know by now, I am your captain, Carlisle Cullen, and this is my Co-Captain, Peter Denali."

The crowd erupts into applause, some even cheering at his words. Captain laughs, lowering his hands.

"We will land on our new home planet shortly, and I am sure you all feel very eager to get there, but today is not about discussing Alterna," he says, causing the room to go silent once more. He pauses momentarily, several different emotions crossing his face before he begins. "This day is perhaps one of the most significant in history, as your generation will be the first to begin to harvest new life on Alterna with the person chosen for you within your pod. Together, you will continue to thrive on Tesla, until we set foot on our new planet."

There are several frantic clapping hands in the audience, which are silenced as Captain raises his hand. "I would like to begin the announcements by starting out with my son, your future leader,

Edwardâ€" "

Angela leans into me. "Here we go."

I am about to respond just as Edward Cullen stands. Clamping my mouth shut, I take in the smoothness of his gait as he saunters over to the stage, the silver of his suit shimmering in the bright overhead light. He seems so confident, almost prideful as he meets his father's side, flashing us all a smile that somehow melts the sweltering anxiety in the pit of my stomach.

We have known our future captain since childhood, having attended school with him until we reached the age of fourteen, where we were divided and sent to begin training specialized for our pods. We have always known Edward would be our next leader and have treated him likeroyalty, as would be expected, and is such.

Edward begins to rattle off a speech about how thrilled he is to be captain, and I notice Mike Newton, a future mathematics educator, rolling his eyes in agitation.

I lean toward him, curious. "What?" I whisper.

"Self-righteous," he mumbles, staring ahead. I divert my attention back to Edward, listening intently to him.

"â€|it is a great privilege to be elected as the next leaderâ€|"

"Elected?" Mike murmurs. "He is Cullen's kid. No one else stands a chance against him. Even if this were a democracy, which it is not, we would not get a choice. The Cullen and Denali family will overrule us until the end of time."

I settle back in my chair, contemplating his words as Edward continues his speech.

"Thank you, Edward," Peter speaks next, patting Edward on the back before turning to us. "I would like you all to welcome Edward's new mate, Tanya Denali."

Tanya is the next to stand, and my eyes are immediately drawn to her attire. She is dressed in a gorgeous, dark gray, skin-tight suit, her matching high-heeled boots clinking against the floor as she makes her way forward. Edward holds his hand out to help her, her long blonde tresses bouncing as she bounds up the stairs. The crowd continues to cheer for them, but I am slightly befuddled.

I turn to Angela and she notices me immediately, lifting her eyebrows in confusion. "What?"

Unable to form a coherent thought, I quickly shake my head and return my eyes to the couple before me. They are holding hands and smiling at us as they take their seats on the stage beside Peter Denali, watching Captain Cullen intently as he walks to the center of the stage.

"We will begin the announcements with the first level of the ship, the Education Pod. I will start listing the male names in alphabetical order."

Captain begins calling off names and people are met with their mates, none of whom seem fazed by their prearranged companions. Mike Newton is the sixth name to be called, and he grumbles something under his breath as he stands to pass me.

It is not until Angela's name is called and she is matched with Mike that I begin to question the effectiveness of the partnering system our leaders have put into place. We are assured from childhood that the commanders take special care in determining who we are paired with, but I wonder how thorough they could possibly be in such small pods.

The system is set so that our bloodlines remain pure and no inbred offspring is produced on Tesla, yet our mates are always limited to those within our own pods. We are taught that by mating within our own pods, we will continue to grow and expand our knowledge base on one particular subject.

I speculate that questionable logic for a moment, but not too long, as my name is called. "Isabella Swan," Captain says, gesturing toward Eric Yorkie.

I narrow my eyes momentarily before standing. I brush through the crowd and meet Eric's side, taking his hand. He sends me a smile and a wink. "Hey."

"Hi," I reply, keeping my head down as Captain continues with the rest of the names.

I lift my eyes and find Angela watching me intently. I stare back for a moment, wondering if she finds this as questionable as I do.

I am not sure, but I intend to find out.

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><p>So, here's the first chapter and it is a collab with Vampiregirl93. We will be taking turns with AN and review replies. Odds will be Fyre, evens will be Vamp. I absolutely love everything about this story so far and hope that the Sci-Fi label doesn't scare you away. We're hoping to bring you a completely unique take on the future of the human race. **

**We've expanded and tweaked the original OS and there is lots of new material, during and beyond. We hope you enjoy this much better as we were able to delve deeper into our characters. **

See you next week :)

Fyre

2. Bloodlines

**Fran betas for us. 2browneyes, ceceprincess1217, and Lissa pre-read the one shot, and now Judyblue and Gabby1017 are joining us on this journey through space ;) **

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><p>BPOV

The following evening, after giving it much thought, I decide to investigate the mating history stored in Tesla's databases. Fortunately, it is all housed here in the library, although not in my area of expertise. Which means I have no choice but to ask for help, and I know just the person.

Angela approaches near the end of my shift. "Hey, Bella. I was wondering if you wanted to go down to the common rooms tonight?"

"Uh." I hesitate. "Well, I was hoping you would grant me entrance into the records sector." At her frown, I hurry to explain, "Something on the information I was entering today confused me and I wanted to check into it further." When she still does not answer, I beg her with my eyes. "Please."

She huffs and I know she is going to give in, but I hold in my smile of relief. "Of course, I will let you in, but I wanted to try and get to know Mike a little better, you know? I am going to mate with him soon and I have never taken the time to really talk to him before."

Hearing her speak this way is a reminder that I need to hurry. It is as if she has already accepted her fate and is intending to settle with Mike tomorrow. "Ang, you have time," I say softly. "The ceremony is not for another six weeks."

Her cheeks tinge pink. "I know, but I do not want to wait to be mated without having more of an idea who he is. I feel it is important to understand a person better priorâ€| I nod, unable to argue with that logic. Angela shrugs lightly. "I will be spending the rest of my life with him."

A renewed sense of urgency moves through me with her proclamation, so I start leading us back toward the record-keeping room. "Did I tell you that I found my great ancestor's journal?"

Angela, who was walking quietly beside me, stops and grabs my arm. "Yes, Bella, you mentioned it." She peers over my shoulder at the door and then back to me. "But honestly, that is not our reality. She was lucky â€| if this _love _is even all it is made out to be."

My shoulders loosen and sag.

Right now, as we are, I will not have Angela on my side.

I need to go into that room and start my study. Hopefully, my suspicions will be confirmed and I can inform Angela, for her sake as well as my own.

Angela waves her wrist over the keypad to unlock the door. I sigh in relief as it pops open, turning to her. "Thank you, Ang. Maybe we can go to the common rooms tomorrow after shift?"

"Sure." She smiles brightly and turns her back to me, almost skipping down the hall.

I inhale deeply in mental preparation as I turn back to the door and enter the room with nervous anticipation. Not knowing exactly where to start, I take a seat at the center table and peer around the room. There are shelves upon shelves of our history in here. Everything from discs to file folders and even hand written notebooks line the wall in neat rows. Any information pertinent to our history is stored in this room.

"Think, Bella, think," I urge myself. If Amelia and Teddy had love then why can we not be allowed the same opportunity? Was that emotion flawed? Surely not, or they would not have permitted them to be together. They would have left one of them to perish, yet they do not afford us that choice.

Looking around, I slowly rise from my seat and make my way to the very last row of stored records. "You have to start somewhere, why not the beginning?" I muse as I draw the first TwiDisc from the shelf. Centering it on the table, the information appears before me.

After what seems like hours, I run across the first Mating Ceremony pairings. Not realizing how important this discovery is, I address JAKE, "Could you transfer this file to my TwiPad, please?"

"Isabella," JAKE says as his hologram flickers to life in the form of an androgynous shape. "You are aware that you do not have permission to be in this sector?"

My jaw gapes at being chastised by my TwiCharacter. "I am aware, but this is important." I cross my arms over my chest in an attempt to show my unwillingness to back down on this matter. "I am waiting."

"Very well," JAKE replies, and the images form a stream that flows directly into my device. When the upload is complete, he asks, "Will that be all, Isabella?"

"Actually," I hedge. "Could you transfer all Mating Ceremony files?"

Without reply, the information streams through the air, although JAKE still appears reluctant about my request. "It is done," he states without inflection.

"Thank you, JAKE. That is all for now," I dismiss him and return to my probing.

Following the same procedure, I scan through each TwiDisc, moving forward in time, specifically focusing on the matches for each ceremony. By the time I have made it to the present, my eyes are burning, so I replace all of the TwiDiscs and pick up my TwiPad to leave the room.

Back in my personal quarters, I am reinvigorated from the walk and decide to look more closely at the files I gathered. I am not sure what I expect to find, but am hoping that something will jump out at me.

Opening the file on my TwiPad, I run my fingers over the screen and

move the images into the air to spread before me. Each file is lined beside the other as I sit on my bed. Carefully, I arrange them in order from oldest to most current.

Taking my time, I study each set of pairs, from the original ceremony all the way up to the final file I retained. It is not until I get to seventy years that something peaks my attention. It actually makes my eyes widen and a small gasp escape.

"No," I mutter to myself. I shake my head and blink my eyes. I scan the information with my eyes several times before slouching. "This is not possible. Is it?" I muse.

I jump from my bed and begin pacing.

"There is no way this is happening and someone is not aware," I say to know one. I stop pacing and take a deep breath. I reopen my eyes slowly and call out, "JAKE."

His form appears. "Yes, Isabella."

"Are you positive the records you transferred are not corrupted?" I ask hesitantly.

I think I can almost hear him huff before he answers. "Isabella, are you questioning my accuracy?"

I shake my head, knowing well that he did not make an error. "No, JAKE. I am â€¦ I am sorry. You may go."

"Very well." His form begins to disappear, light fading into the background as a new thought occurs to me.

"JAKE, wait!" I exclaim. He reappears immediately.

"Yes, Isabella?"

"I â€¦" I hesitate to answer and then sigh. "I need your help."

There are a few moments of silence. "Anything, Isabella."

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Later that week, my family is posed at the small sitting area in my parent's quarters, chattering mindlessly about the days to come when my brother, Samuel, inquiries about The Mating Ceremony. I involuntarily seize up. Samuel is but twelve years old, and just as everyone else, has already accepted his fate. Not only accepted but also embraced it. As he should, I suppose. He was conditioned to place his trust in the mating system.

"Do you know who you are paired with?" he asks.

"Actually," I begin hesitantly. My mother and father throw me

questioning glances, neither of them seeming pleased.

"Is this about the journal, Isabella?" my father questions, knowing me too well. He unleashes a sigh and turns to my mother. "I told you she did not need that thingâ€œ"

"This is not about the journal," I cut in, slamming my mouth closed as I realize what I have done. My father turns to me, lifting an eyebrow, the displeasure written clearly across his face. "I am sorry, sir. I just meant to explain that I discovered something the other day I think you will find interesting."

My mother's eyebrows knit together. "You have been researching," she concludes after a moment of watching me.

Can she read me like a book?

"Er â€| yes," I begin, suddenly nervous about sharing this information. They are my family, I have no reason to feel trepid, yet I cannot deny admitting this information. "It is about the mating system. I researched the history."

"How?" my father asks, furrowing his brows. "There are hundreds of them."

"Well, I started with the Commanding Pod." As an explanation, I add, "They are our leaders and it seemed to make sense to begin with those who overrule us." He nods in acceptance, making no move to protest. I lower my voice to a whisper before continuing. "I have found a link in the bloodlines."

"A link?" my mother asks, nearly hissing. "As in, a relation? Possible contaminationâ€œ"

I nod just as Samuel exclaims, "Gross!" My father's eyes grow wider than saucers. Samuel immediately straightens his posture and quips, "Sorry, sir."

My father turns to me, raising his eyebrows in question. "A link? Where?" Feeling nauseated, I duck my head and whisper the answer. "What?" he asks, louder. "Repeat yourself, Bella."

"The Cullens and the Denalis!" I exclaim and then lift my head, startled at my loud tone. Just because I know the truth does not mean everyone else on Tesla should know as well.

He immediately laughs, shaking his head in disbelief. "Isabella, you cannot possibly believe that is true. The commanders would never make a mistake that big, they are intent on keeping the bloodlines pure. Where did you hear this nonsense anyhow?"

I stop breathing. "Uh â€| I, um, I â€| JAKE," I call, averting my attention to the blue hologram.

"Good evening, Isabella," JAKE greets me.

My father sighs. "Not now, Jâ€œ"

"Allow her to show us, Charles," my mother objects. She turns my way, sending me an encouraging smile. "Go ahead, Isabella. Tell us."

I nod. "JAKE, show them the file I had you retrieve from the classified room the other day, please."

Shock crosses my father's features. "How did youâ€" He stops short as JAKE illuminates the file through the air for everyone to see. My parents take their time inspecting the information, both seemingly engrossed by the lists of names while Samuel suddenly seems to be rather bored. He asks to be excused, and my father waves him off without taking his eyes from the files.

After what seems like hours, my father finally turns to me, an expression of concern on his face. "Perhaps you were correct, Isabella. Are you certain these records have not been tampered with?"

"The Webbers are in charge of this sector," I explain, maintaining eye contact with him. "After Mating Day, they are sent down here to ensure they are locked away. Do you not trust them?"

He shakes his head. "Of course, I do."

I nod. "That will be all, JAKE."

The hologram closes and my father leans back in his chair, seemingly deep in thought. "I am finding this difficult to believe; how could they make such a big mistake, and within their own pod? They have assured us countless times that they follow an elaborate system. It makes me question their ability to match for us."

I nod in agreement. "It is a cause for concern, Father. We cannot keep the bloodlines pure if we continue to mate within our own pods."

"Yes, I am aware, but that is not supposed to happen for another thousand years."

"Someone made a mistake," Mother mumbles. "You will need to inform them, right away. It will not be good news for Edward Cullen and Tanya Denali. I cannot see this ending well."

I nod in agreeance. "I understand."

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I tell Angela the next morning, during breakfast. Her drink nearly shoots from her nose when I explain what I found in the classified files.

"What!" she exclaims. "How could theyâ€"|"

"It must have been an accident," I explain with a shrug. "I am not sure how they messed up, but we need to tell them before it is too late."

She stares at me for a long moment, her mouth opening and closing in

disbelief. "Oh â€¦ Bella," she sighs out, slouching her shoulders. "Of course, I will have your back. Uh â€¦ is it okay if I tell Mike? I mean, what if there is a link in our bloodline too?" She shudders visibly.

I nod. "Of course. The more people that know, the better."

We tell Mike later on in the evening. His reaction is the one I least expect. I have never seen someone so enraged before as those emotions of passion do not normally apply to us. We have never been given reason for those feelings to be invoked.

It does not take long for the Education Pod to buzz with the news of the link in the bloodlines of those mating this year. During lunch, two days later, Angela and I are approached by my chosen mate, Eric. He is standing shyly off to the side, seemingly awaiting for me to take notice. Not sure of his intent for seeking me out, I pretend to not see him.

The effort is in vain as he clears his throat, leaving me no option but to address him. "Oh, Eric, hello." I give him a minimum smile so as not to encourage.

"Hello, Isabella. I was hoping we may speak?" he asks, motioning to the empty chairs across from Angela and me.

"Sure, have a seat," I say, noticing that Ben Cheney is also with him. "Both of you."

The two boys sit and I cannot help but notice as Ben's eyes trail over to my friend, who is looking anywhere but at him. Eric, on the other hand, is gazing at me with a curious expression.

Deciding to face this conversation head on, I lean forward and address him. "Eric? Did you wish to speak with me about something?"

He shakes his head and responds, "Oh yes, Isabella, I am sorry. I have heard the rumors and am curious as to what they mean. This is a time when we should be bonding, but I hear this news and wonder if we will ever actually be mates."

I sigh. "Eric, I cannot honestly answer that question at this point. Yes, the rumors are true. I have found a link in some of the selected pairs' previous bloodlines," I confirm for him.

"And with ours?" he asks, his eyes intent upon me.

I clear my throat and meet his stare. "No, I have found no link between our families"â€"he starts to smile, but I hold up my finger, halting himâ€" "but, do you not see how the whole process is outdated? There is simply no way we can continue to be mated within our pods only. It is dire for the future of our race that we correct this issue now, not later."

Ben speaks up unexpectedly. "So there is a chance I may not have to mate with Lauren Mallory?" His eyes spark with hope as he glances to Angela.

"Sadly, I cannot speak for what Captain may decide on this matter,

but it is my hope that he will take a long look into our history and do what is best for all of Tesla," I respond sympathetically.

I find it interesting that someone other than me is not positive they have been paired with the proper mate. Although, I have to wonder of Ben's motives as he cannot take his eyes from my friend.

Angela chooses that moment to intervene in the conversation. "I have known of Mike for my entire life so when he was chosen as my mate, I thought it made sense. But now, I have to agree with Bella. The pods should be intermixed to prevent future contamination. No time like the present." She shrugs her shoulders and looks at each of us, finishing with Ben and holding his eye a bit longer, her cheeks darkening.

"But it must not always be within another pod, though, right?" Ben asks hastily.

"No I do not think so," I say and watch as he looks to Angela and smiles triumphantly. Not sure what to make of their curious actions, I direct my attention back to Eric. "I am sorry this leaves us in limbo, but I feel very strongly about this."

"Should we spend time together, get to know each other more, just in case we move forward with the ceremony?" Eric asks.

"I truly am sorry, Eric, but my focus is on this bloodline error. You and Ben may join us for lunch if you like, but that is all of the time I can allot right now," I say apologetically, but my mind still rejects him as my mate.

I do not know who I wish that candidate to be, but Eric Yorkie it is not.

The rest of the week passes with an undertone of rumblings throughout my pod. The mistake is in the forefront of everyone's mind. I almost feel regretful for allowing the news to spread before informing Captain, but I need people on my side.

This way, when the time comes, they will listen.

* * *

><p>Sooo, what do you guys think? Will all go well with Captain, yay or nay? Check in with us next week to find out! We're so excited to share more with you guys, and THANK YOU so much for all the love! Your follows, faves, and reviews have us blown away.

Be sure to 'Like' our Facebook page, Fyregirl Fics, if you haven't done it yet! We have lots of banners, pics and exclusive teasers!

**Guess who Bella encounters next? **

Vamp

End
file.